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out a Project54-equipped motorcycle, demonstrated by Greenland Police Chief Mike Maloney at a recent event. [View Larger](#)

Riding a wave of success with geeked-out police cars that allow officers to control the vehicle's technology using voice commands, a University of New Hampshire lab has expanded the project, including a partnership with public television.

UNH's Consolidated Advanced Technologies Laboratory last week unveiled plans to expand its program -- dubbed Project54 -- that has already deployed more than 600 technology-enabled police cars in New Hampshire. Another 100 system-enabled vehicles have also been licensed to authorities in other states, according to Andrew Kun, a professor at the UNH laboratory.

The system enables integrated voice control of the police cruiser's lights, video recorder, mapping software and criminal records access. Goals for the new features include the integration of outside devices, such as personal digital assistants and expanding mobile connectivity through the addition of datacasting in conjunction with New Hampshire Public Television (NHPT).

"Datacasting uses excess (broadcast) bandwidth to transmit data to a single vehicle

or a group of vehicles," said Kun.

The idea is to give officers in the field access to high-resolution photos and video, as well as access to data from regional or national sources, such as the Amber Alert system or the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Digital Emergency Alert System, of which NHPT is a part.

NHPT has been working with Project54 for about a year, according to Grace Lessner, manager of communications for NHPT. Lessner said she hopes the partnership will continue moving forward.

"The potential with datacasting is to be able to send large encrypted files -- documents, maps, spreadsheets, photos -- rapidly at very high transmission speeds, about 1 megabit per second on

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average," she said.

The group is still in the testing phases of the datacasting option, and there are hurdles to overcome. For instance, because it is a broadcast feed, vehicles need to be stationary to receive data, according to Kun.

Both parties, however, are confident the technical challenges will be overcome.

In addition to the new features, project organizers are also working to roll out the technology to other types of vehicles, including motorcycles, fire trucks, rescue vehicles and marine-patrol units.

The project, initiated in 1999, is being funded through the U.S. Department of Justice, which has put in about \$4 million per year since its inception, according to Kun. The cost of the system is about \$1,000 per vehicle, according to project reports.

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